

THE BOSTON
MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. II.]

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1829.

[No. 38.]

I.

HISTORY OF PANACEAS AND NOS-
TRUMS.

(Continued from page 577.)

Quicksilver and Tar-water.

THE use of crude quicksilver was revived about the year 1730. "Some," says a writer of that day, "got marvellous benefit, others wondrous mischief, and to many that left off in time, it did neither good nor harm." Dr. Turner declared, that "the deglutition of a ponderous metal was a great folly," and exhibited the "sundry tragedies which it had produced." Booth, the celebrated tragedian, performed one of these tragedies in real earnest; for having taken it, "he had his bowels mortify from one end to the other." Dr. Dover gave it great fame in his "Legacy." Dover was an A.B., and a pupil of Sydenham, but became by natural disposition a sheer curemonger, and, like all his fraternity, an unexceeded story-teller. He regarded diseases neither anatomically nor physiologically, and was, therefore, a mere conjecturist. In his practice, he asserts positively that he had *cured consumption* by using fifty bleedings, and diabetes by giving alum posset; and he speaks of administering *opium in forty-and-seven grain doses!* What he calls "solid experience" is nothing else but a tissue of those falsehoods and im-

possibilities with which such men deceive themselves and the world, helped along by a few shrewd catches upon popular notions, which give this sort of orthodox quacks an air of sagacity, but without one sound or valuable observation tending to improved views of any subject. If what he says of his practice be true, for one cure mentioned in his book he must have killed in a hundred cases, which he took care to leave out. He was just the man to get a Bath and Cheltenham reputation, among the rich, as a noted performer of cures, and was accordingly much esteemed by the nobility, and was even sent for to the Methuens, Tracys, and other distinguished families. Mere people of fashion are precisely the materials to be imposed upon.

In his reply to Turner and Brindley, in "The Legacy," he makes the "Hydrargyrus" to say for itself, that "it could not fill an empty cavity in the head with brains; but that, if it could not make a lodgment in so solitary and unfurnished an apartment, the owner need not be under any apprehensions, for fools were never known to go mad. Free from all agitating thoughts and doubts, they enjoy a profound tranquillity of mind, and are happy in an undisturbed conceit of being extremely wise." He apparently alludes to those antagonists who had raked him most

unmercifully, under the epithets of "*Barber-Surgeons*," "*Timid Physicians*." He applauded "this glorious remedy," the quicksilver being as "*asses' milk*" in asthma, consumption, gout, hysteria and stone. The notion of the efficacy of quicksilver had been obtained from Sweden and Hungary, where the miners had been in the habit of swallowing the metal in the morning to purloin it at night, and purchase "a choppin of drink" with it after it came away. To get over the consequences of detection, they gave out that certain effects were produced by it in diseases. Dover said that it was unnecessary to go farther than ONE POUND AND A HALF FOR A DOSE, in obstruction of the bowels, though "larger doses *shot* through the body better than small." A wit, who advocated every one's having the liberty of dying his own way, advised its being called for at coffee-houses, and taken in all beverages, by the "don't-know-howish" people. It was brought into general disrepute by a ludicrous incident which happened to a quicksilver lady in a ball-room, and which, in the female world more especially, created an universal horror of quicksilver. Many philosophers, however, had speculated upon the production of vivacious barometers, and the convenience of being able to predict the weather "by the fall of the fluid metal in their intestines," for the "better ordering of morning calls, and cockney jaunts to country houses." Such was the coarse but racy humor of the English of a century since.

About three years ago, at Cheltenham (the great *otium cum dignitate* of the race of "deluded individuals" in pursuit of quacks and

quackery, both in physis and religion), we met with a retired Londoner, who, possessed by an extraordinary mania for nostrums, took all that came up. The result of his experience was, that he had been obliged to quit a business of 4000*l.* per annum, from an irritable and debilitated state of constitution, brought on by his own folly. A Cheltenham man, with the *peculiar* wisdom of that enlightened town, lent this nostrum-hunter a quicksilver treatise, and recommended him to try the remedy. It produced no effect, except a great weight in the stomach, as white mustard seed had previously excited heat and eruptions.

It is singular that the irregular votaries of Hygeia have frequently derived their origin from the mother church; but it was reserved for Bishop Berkeley to unite the most subtle scepticism in metaphysics, with the most extraordinary credulity in the virtues of *tar-water*. The worthy bishop dosed himself with two quarts daily. "It strengthened," he asserted, "the bodies of soldiers and sailors, and would be extremely useful in a siege, persons having lived several days without any other subsistence." He recommended it also "for the relief of the poor, and sedentary persons and cattle." Mr. Prior, a toad-eater, or tuft-hunter to the bishop, probably on the look out for glebe and tythes, in his narrative of four hundred and sixty-one tar-water cures, included many cases of barrenness, gout, loss and want of complexion, lowness of spirits, spitting, sleepiness, stupidity, vapors, stones,—in fact, of all the diseases to which men, kine, and horses are subject, curable and incurable. Extraordinary cures of incurable diseases are ne-

ver indeed wanting to confirm the efficacy of a panacea or a quack. The Bath ladies, among whom at this period, according to Pompey the Little, it had been the fashion to use artificial means to subdue the permanent flush produced by drinking nantz in the morning, and dissipation in the evening, rejoiced to discover a new and simple method of raising the simple lily on their visages; whilst those who had both starved the roses and pinched the lilies on their cheeks, sought in tar-water the double virtue of producing a quite opposite effect. A few years ago, the publication of the posthumous correspondence of Berkeley, in the old "Monthly Magazine," revived numerous facts in recommendation of tar-water; and modern ladies have been known to try, but in vain, its efficacy in the restoration of faded charms. Bishop Berkeley's treatise has been lauded as remarkable for excellence of style. Mr. Reeve, in his "Cure for the Epidemical Madness of drinking Tar-water," says to the bishop,—"In your younger days, my lord, you made the surprising discovery of the unreality of matter, and now, in your riper age, you have undertaken to prove the reality of a universal remedy; an attempt to talk men out of their reason, did of right belong to that author who had first tried to persuade them out of their senses." Stephen Hales, the great experimentalist, also wrote on tar-water.

[Errata. In the first part of this article, in the last number of the Journal: for "Guester's Practical Piety," read greater practical piety; and, four lines lower, for "select," read velvet.]

II.

DR. EPPS ON PRUSSIC ACID.

Extract of a Lecture on the Use of Prussic or Hydrocyanic Acid, by Dr. Epps, Lecturer on Materia Medica at the Royal Westminster Hospital.

THE profession is much indebted to Dr. Elliotson for the facts which he has made known regarding the use of this acid in affections of the stomach. In forty-six of the cases related by him, pain existed at the pit of the stomach, and in seven of these the pain was increased after eating; and in one more the pain was dreadfully violent after eating. In four cases the pain at the pit of the stomach was constant: in four cases the præcordiæ were tender on pressure: in six cases there was tightness, increased in some after eating: weight, in three or four cases, was felt after eating: in three cases the pain was of a gnawing kind: in some cases the pain came on periodically: in fourteen individuals, flatulency was a prominent symptom: in nine, tremblings occurred: in four cases, nausea existed: in fifteen individuals, vomiting sometimes of the food, sometimes of bile, and occurring, in one, every morning: seven had a discharge of fluid into the mouth: pain of the head, in some examples alternating with the pain in the stomach, was a symptom. Nervousness, debility, and lowness of spirits were conspicuous in some of those relieved. Some cases of pains of the heart and of the left side are enumerated where the acid is beneficially given; indeed, this is a most powerful remedy, and one which will hold a very high place in the

practice of every intelligent practitioner.

You will thus see that pain at the pit of the stomach is one of the most striking symptoms relieved by the use of this medical agent; that accompanying this pain, vomiting, discharge of fluid into the mouth, nausea, flatulency and tremors were frequent. This combination of symptoms indicates considerable *irritability* of stomach, and it is in cases of irritability that this medicine is peculiarly useful. When *inflammation* of the mucous membrane exists, the remedy is not so useful; leeches and blisters are the most beneficial; and if any irritability should remain, then the acid confers all its advantages. When after its use, moreover, nausea, vomiting, pain and tightness of the præcordia, are either produced or increased, the remedy should be intermitted. You will remember, gentlemen, that it is when pain is at the *pit of the stomach* that this remedy is beneficial; when the pain affects other parts of the abdomen it is not so useful; and you must bear in mind that a sensation of weight, and that increased after a meal, occurs very frequently when *inflammation* of the lining membrane of the bowels exists; that *tightness* also in such a state of parts is frequent; further you have generally *febrile* symptoms in addition; and these will be your guide. In inflammation of the stomach *pain* exists, but then it is a *burning* pain; and you have *heat* over the epigastric region, while the extremities are cold.

There is, moreover, another circumstance to which you must have respect. It is this: that you use *prussic acid*. You are

not to use what may sometimes be sent for prussic acid; for this is often only playing with disease, since the article sent is little better than water. See that your prussic acid is good;—obtain it from good practical chemists, who have their character to support, and then you may be certain of gaining all the effects you wish. I have frequently been very much disappointed when I have found, on calling on my patients, to whom prussic acid has been prescribed, that no mitigation of the disease has taken place; I have examined the medicine, and found it to be totally inert. I have directed them to get their medicine made up at some respectable house, and, to my great pleasure and their satisfaction, the same prescription has been the means of effecting a speedy cure. Medicine is such only when it is good.

I shall conclude this lecture with the case of an out-patient at this hospital.

Elizabeth Tett, married, forty-eight years of age, being ill two months. Tightness at the pit of the stomach; pain on drawing the breath; constant weight; flatulence, not relieved by eructation; water rising into the mouth.

Take of Prussic Acid, 3i.

Aromatic Confection, gr. v.

Pure Water, 3ij.

Ammoniated Tincture of Valerian, 3ij.—Mix.

A teaspoonful to be taken three times a day.

July 18th.—Tightness, pain and weight diminished; palpitation just as bad; flatulence not so much; no water in the mouth. Continue the use of the mixture.

July 21st.—Tightness, pain and weight still less; flatulence less; water in the mouth quite

gone ; palpitation as before. Continue the use of the mixture, taking two spoonfuls.

July 25th.—Palpitation better; all the other symptoms relieved.

August 1st.—Great deal better. Continue the use of the mixture, and add twenty drops of the aromatic spirit of ammonia.

August 6th.—Cured.

III.

On the Difference between Minims, Drops and Grains of various Liquids, and on the Propriety of using exclusively the Minim Measure in prescribing active Fluid Medicines.

By ELIAS DURAND.

THE difference between the bulk of drops of various liquids was long since observed, without, however, any immediate attempt being made to discover the cause of this discrepancy ; which was merely attributed to the variable density of the fluids. Dr. Shuttleworth, of Liverpool, appears to have been the first who ascertained, by careful experiments on the weights of drops of different liquids, the inaccuracy and danger of exhibiting active fluid substances in this form. The results of his experiments were justly appreciated, and an important change was soon afterwards introduced by the College of Physicians of London. Their object being to ensure accuracy in the measurement of fluids below one drachm, they subdivided the wine pint down to the sixtieth part of a fluid drachm, and called each of the ultimate divisions a *minim*.

Induced by particular motives to ascertain the exact difference between the minim and the drop of several liquids, I undertook a

series of experiments, which were extended to the grain weight.

The results surprised me so much, that they appeared worthy of careful repetition, with a view to publication, believing they might prove useful to the physician as well as the pharmacist.

The following table, based on accurate experiments frequently repeated, will show at once, by careful inspection, how much this subject is deserving the particular attention of professional men ; and how great a desideratum is the early and general adoption of an accurate measure, instead of the uncertain and variable mode of dropping active fluid medicines. The bulk of drops depends not only on the density of the liquid which furnishes them, and the cohesion of the constituent particles of that liquid, but also on the shape of the mouth of the vessel from which they are poured. An open vessel with a beak, such as the common graduated measure, affords a larger drop than a bottle with the stopper half drawn out,—a mode commonly practised. That furnished by the dropping tube is still smaller, and is even liable to vary with the greater or lesser diameter of its extremity. Besides, in every instance, the first drops poured from any vase are always smaller than those subsequently obtained.

It is evident, from the above considerations, that the practice of prescribing fluid medicines by drops is altogether objectionable; and especially at the present time, when so many proximate principles of very energetic vegetable substances are daily introduced into practice, which may be indifferently administered in aqueous, acetous, vinous, or alcoholic measures.

The table below satisfactorily proves to what serious consequences an ignorance of these facts may lead the physician and the pharmacist. For instance, hydriodate of potassa is soluble in alcohol as well as water, and these solutions may be indifferently employed as remedies in the same cases. Yet twenty drops of the alcoholic solution are equivalent to M. x. and to gr. ix.; whilst the same number of drops of the aqueous solution are equal to M. xxij. and to gr. xx., although they scarcely differ in specific gravity, and contain the same proportions of hydriodate of potassa in solution. It is obvious, then, that though the effects of these solutions be the same, they cannot safely be prescribed in doses containing the same number of drops, since the latter would be more than twice as strong as the former.

Colchicum yields its remedial principles to vinegar, wine and alcohol. Fifty drops of the acetous or vinous solutions, are equal in bulk to eighty drops of the alcoholic tincture; a circumstance which has not before been pointed out, and is probably the reason why the two former preparations have been considered so much more active than the latter; although were they administered in minims, they would in all probability prove equally beneficial in the same doses. These remarks apply to many other substances which yield their active principles to alcohol, wine, water, &c.

As the slight difference between the minims of various liquids depends entirely on the slight variation in their specific gravities, the minim measure is not liable to the irregularity and uncertainty of drops, and is of course the best fractional mode of prescribing

energetic liquids; inasmuch as the solvent is almost invariably directed by the pharmacopœia in fluid measure.

The experiments which form the subject of this paper, were performed with accurate instruments on the liquid preparations of the United States Pharmacopœia, and on a few others peculiar to foreign pharmacopœias. The minim measure was made with particular care by my ingenious friend Mr. Daniel B. Smith; the drops were all obtained from the same drop glass with a tube of medium calibre; the scales and weights were very accurate, and every means used to prevent the escape of volatile fluids.

With respect to the size and weight of the drops of the various liquids, we may establish as general rules from the following table:

1. That the liquids which contain a *small proportion* of water afford a *small drop*; while, on the contrary, the liquids containing a *large quantity* of water furnish a *large drop*. For instance, *concentrated acids, ethers, rectified alcohol, fixed and essential oils, &c.*, which contain but a very small proportion of water, yield a *smaller drop* than diluted acids, weak alcohol, wine, vinegar, &c.

2. That amongst the liquids containing a *large proportion* of water, those which are not charged with remedial substances give a larger and heavier drop, than these same liquids containing extraneous bodies in solution. As for example, *weak alcohol, wine, vinegar and water*, furnish a *larger and heavier drop* than the tinctures prepared from them.

It is difficult to account for these peculiarities; but I am inclined to think that in the first instance, the molecules of water

have a stronger cohesion or affinity for each other than those of the other liquids, and require consequently a greater accumulation of particles before the drop can be forced by its own gravity to separate from the aqueous mass. In the second, the cohesion is probably impaired by the interposition of the bodies in solution.

In adopting the minim measure, the editors of our national Pharmacopœia have not given their

reasons for the change, and have left us in the dark respecting the difference between the two modes of administering small quantities of active liquids. It is owing to this neglect, in part, that so little attention has been paid to the subject in this country, and that so many professional men continue to consider the subject as a mere alteration of words.

The following table will illustrate my remarks:—

Table showing the Differences between Minims, Drops and Grains, of various Medicinal Liquid Preparations of the Pharmacopœia of the United States, &c.

	No. of drops in 20 minims.	No. of min. in 20 drops.	No. of drops in 20 grains.	No. of grains in 20 drops.
Sulphuric acid - - - -	30	13.3	25	16
Sulphuric ether - - - -	50	8	60	6
Rectified alcohol - - - -	46	8.6	57	7.1
Nitric acid - - - -	28	14.2	22.2	18
Acetic acid (crystallizable) - - - -	40	10	40	10
Muriatic acid - - - -	18	22.2	18.1	22
Oil of wormseed (chenopod. anthelminticum)	40	10	50	8
of peppermint, aniseed, sweet almond,				
olive, palma christi - - - -	40	10	43.5	9
of cloves - - - -	40	10	36	11
of cinnamon - - - -	40	10	32	12.5
Copaiba - - - -	40	10	40	10
Diluted alcohol - - - -	40	10	42	9.5
Tincture of hydriodate of potassa, cantharides, kino, digitalis, assafœtida, sulph. acid, colchicum, opium, valerian, guaiacum - - - -	40	10	43	9.3
of valerian, guaiacum (volatile) - - - -	40	10	50	8
of muriate of iron - - - -	44	9.1	50	8
Wine, Teneriffe - - - -	26	15.3	25	16
antimonial - - - -	24	16.6	26	15.3
of opium (Sydenham's laudanum) - - - -	26	15.3	29	13.7
of colchicum root and seeds - - - -	25	16	29	13.7
Vinegar, distilled - - - -	19	21	20	20
of opium (black drop) } - - - -	26	15.3	25	16
of colchicum } - - - -				
of squill - - - -				
Water, distilled - - - -	15	26.6	17.5	24.5
solution of hydrocyanic acid - - - -	15	26.6	17.5	24.5
sulphuric acid (1 to 7) - - - -	17	23.5	17	23.5
nitric acid do. - - - -	17	23.5	17	23.5
ammonia, strong - - - -	18	22.2	18.5	22
do. weak - - - -	15	26.6	20	20
hydriodate of potassa - - - -	18	22.2	20	20
arsenite of potassa - - - -	19	21	20	20

Prepared according to the process of the London Apothecary Hall.

Phil. Journ. of Pharmacy.

IV.

The following letters to the Editor of the London Medical Gazette, and published in a late No. of that Journal, afford authentic accounts,—one of a Stillborn Child that had been retained in the Uterus thirteen calendar Months,—and the other of an Obstinate Hemorrhage caused by drawing a Tooth.

LETTER I.

SIR,—The subject of this extraordinary case is a small active woman, aged 38, in good health, and the mother of seven children exclusive of this. About the beginning of July, 1828, she missed the catamenia, which should have appeared at that time, and soon after found herself pregnant. In October following she quickened, and felt the motions of the child till January, when they ceased, and never returned. She had continued to increase in size till that time, but afterwards decreased, and felt only a sensation of a lump in the lower part of the belly, towards the left side, which sensation continued till her delivery. Her health was good, and she continued as active as ever. At this time (January) she consulted me, when I gave it as my opinion that her child was dead, and that she would be delivered of it on or before the completion of the nine months. She engaged me to attend her.

I heard nothing more of her till the 19th Aug., 1829, when, passing by her house, I was called in, and found her in great pain, like labor. An examination discovered it to be so; and, about half an hour afterwards, she was delivered of a male stillborn child, fol-

lowed soon after by the placenta. The child seemed to have died about the fifth or sixth month, which corresponds with her account. It measured in length between nine and ten inches; weighed six ounces; was much reduced, shrivelled and emaciated; of the color of tanned leather, without fetor or any disagreeable smell. I have it by me now, immersed in spirits. She is at this time, the 28th of August, doing well.

There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this woman's statement, she being of good character, and all the circumstances of her condition well known to her neighbors. She fancied, after the month of January, that her pregnancy had gone off, and that all the symptoms which she had had were such as are customary to women at what they term the turn of life, or final cessation of the menses, of which she had seen none since her conception in July, 1828; and was therefore rather surprised when I told her she was in labor. But her age being only 38, and the circumstances above detailed, preclude the idea of the "turn of life" with her.

I have submitted these facts without note or comment, as they occurred, but will be very glad to read your observations or those of your correspondents upon them. In the course of a long practice, I have neither seen nor heard of any such occurrence, nor do I remember reading it. It is a singular phenomenon, and very curious both in a physiological and pathological point of view.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

PETER CULLEN, Surgeon.

LETTER II.

Sir,—Having lately seen in the *Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, (vol. xii. p. 500, and vol. xiv. p. 379,) two cases of hemorrhage after the extraction of teeth, which proved fatal in spite of all the means devised by the ablest surgeons, I am tempted to communicate to you the result of my own practice in a similar case, which fortunately saved the life of my patient.

In the year 1801, I extracted a molar tooth from the upper jaw of a man about 30 years of age, and of sanguine temperament. Obstinate hemorrhage followed the operation, and continued so profuse for three days, notwithstanding all the means that I had applied to check it, that the man fainted several times, and was evidently sinking fast.

Under these alarming circum-

stances, it occurred to me that pressure, accurately applied, afforded the best-grounded hope of stopping the flow of blood. I accordingly modelled a tooth in wax, exactly to the shape and size of that which I had extracted, introduced it into the socket which the natural one had occupied, and retained it there by firm pressure. The bleeding was immediately arrested, and the patient rapidly recovered.

I have since, on two or three occasions, adopted this simple but effectual method of arresting hemorrhage caused by the drawing of a tooth, when ordinary remedies seemed likely to fail in producing the desired effect.

Should the above appear worthy a place in your journal, it is at your disposal; whilst I remain,

Your very obedient servant,

J. CORTEZ, Surgeon.

SKETCHES OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE.

PULSATION OF THE UMBILICAL CORD.
INFANTILE ASPHYXIA.

SOME cases, reported in the *Glasgow Journal* for August last, go to show the propriety of continuing, for a considerable time, the efforts to reanimate children apparently stillborn. In the first of these cases an interval of an hour, and in the second of an hour and a half, elapsed between birth and the first symptoms of life. In a third case, in which the length of the interval was half an hour, it was remarked that the second inspiration was accompanied by a return of the pulsation in the cord, which had ceased at the moment of birth. While this continued, however, no

progress was made in breathing. It continued vigorous for fifteen minutes, when it entirely ceased. Artificial inflation, which had been suspended during the pulsation, was then recommenced, and the respiration gradually improved. The circumstance here mentioned is an argument for allowing the connection between mother and child to remain in such cases, until it is proved beyond doubt to be no longer necessary.

ERYSIPELAS.

In those cases of this disease which appear in connection with wounds and other local injuries, and which threaten serious consequences, Dr.

Young, of Glasgow, advises the early employment of extensive scarification. A very severe case is mentioned, occurring in an individual about fifty years of age, in consequence of a bruised cut received on the inside of the tibia. On the second or third day, an erysipelatous redness showed itself round the part, accompanied by fever, and followed by the formation of matter above and below the fascia of the leg. Inflammation, with pain and redness, now began to appear on the outside of the thigh. To prevent, if possible, this part from taking on an action similar to the leg, an incision was made through the fascia on the outside of the man's leg, about ten inches in length. This was followed by a considerable discharge of fluid blood. The next day, the patient was found free from pain, and full of gratitude for the relief he had experienced. The thigh was free from redness, and could bear pressure in every part. The appearance of the leg had also very much improved. The case went on well, the sores became clean, and the gash in the thigh healed in a surprisingly short space of time.

Dr. Y. remarks on the prejudice existing among a majority of the profession against this mode of practice, and acknowledges that it is countenanced by high authority. He also adverts to the difficulty of putting it in execution in private practice, where the aversion of patients would create an almost insurmountable obstacle to its use. In moderate cases, therefore, it may be held optional to resort to it or not, but in

those of a severe character, he advises that it be most strongly insisted on, as the best and only security against a tedious and protracted course, and perhaps fatal termination.

VACCINIA.

Transmission of the Vaccine Disease from the Mother to the Fetus in Utero.

A FACT of some importance is related in a Swedish Journal, and since the authority appears to be good, we should be inclined to place some reliance on its correctness.

A young woman, pregnant with her first child, was vaccinated. When the vesicles were full, on the ninth day, she was delivered of a female child, on whose arm regular vaccine vesicles made their appearance, in the same number and corresponding precisely in position with those on the arm of the mother. These vesicles pursued an uninterrupted course, and left perfect and genuine cicatrices. The child, although healthy at birth, died after six weeks, of some incidental affection of the stomach.

The pastor of the village where this event occurred, gives this account, after an investigation made by him at the request of the Academy of Sciences of Stockholm.

LUMBAR ABSCESS.

AN unusual termination of this disease has been noticed by M. Canlegril, and related in the Bibliothèque Médicale. The abscess was situated in the left lumbar region, and was attended with pain over the left side

of the chest, and some impediment in respiration. Shortly before the period set aside for opening the abscess, it broke, in a fit of coughing, into the bronchia, and its contents were discharged by the mouth. The site of the disease presented a considerable depression, occasioned by the loss of purulent matter; and a tremulous sensation was communicated to the hand placed over it,—probably by the air which had been admitted through the bronchia.

This is the only case of the kind we recollect to have seen noticed by any writer. M. Gerardin, who reported the case to the Royal Academy of Medicine, believes it to be the only one on record.

TREATMENT OF FISTULÆ.

A FORTUNATE accident happened to M. Lisfranc, which may lead to some results of practical value. A patient presented himself with fistula near the sternum, of three years standing. Of late, several new openings had appeared. The discharge was very great, and the general health much injured. M. Lisfranc thought it would be necessary to remove part of the sternum, but by way of preparing for the operation, applied leeches round the part and fomentations, and other appropriate remedies. These having been continued some time, the fistulæ were found to close, and their cure was considered radical.

BOSTON, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1829.

CHLORIDES OF LIME AND SODA.

AN interesting pamphlet, translated from the French of M. LABARRAQUE, of Paris, by JACOB PORTER, and published at New Haven, has been perused by us with great satisfaction. It is entitled "Instructions and Observations concerning the Use of the Chlorides of Soda and Lime," and contains much information on a subject of growing importance in the medical world. It has been ascertained by numerous experiments, instituted both abroad and in this country, that these substances are among the most powerful and useful antiseptics we possess. Externally applied, in a state of greater or less dilution, they have been found to destroy the odor arising from putrid animal matter, to purify vaults, to

disinfect the atmosphere contaminated by the presence of disease, and to improve the surface of ill-conditioned or gangrenous ulcers. Internally taken, they have also proved useful in various disorders. The following are some of the most interesting facts adduced in proof of the efficacy of these agents.

A corpse, which had been interred about a month, was taken up by order of the King's Attorney at Paris, with a view to judicial examination. The odor exhaled by it, however, was so offensive, that it was impossible for the attendants to support it. The subject was therefore sprinkled with the chloride of lime dissolved in water. After a few aspersions the odor was entirely destroyed, and it became practicable to commence the operation.

Eight halls at the Bicêtre, which were very much infected, were purified by a bottle of the concentrated chloride of soda, diluted with thirty parts of water.

In a case of severe and extensive ulceration of the abdominal surface following bubo, which for a whole year had resisted every mode of treatment that could be devised, the same article was applied with success. The chloride, when first used in this case, was diluted with double its weight of water, but its strength was gradually increased until it was applied in a pure state. At the end of eighteen days there remained but a few ulcerated spots, and the patient was rapidly recovering his health and strength.—Diluted in ten parts of water, the chloride was employed in two cases of malignant sore throat, and with decided benefit.

Great benefit was also derived from the internal exhibition of this article, in the dose of twenty-five drops in a cup of water, in the case of an individual who had been poisoned by the hydrosulphuret of potass, which he rejected by vomiting. The preparation thus given, prevented the disengagement of hydrosulphur gas, which had proved very troublesome.

In a case of asphyxia caused by the exhalations of substances taken from the vault of a privy, and attended with severe symptoms of locked jaw, the patient was cured by inhaling the Chlorine.

It is mentioned as a reason for preferring the Chloride of Soda in certain cases, that it does not absorb the moisture of the atmosphere when

brought into the state of a hydrochlorate, but forms a very dry salt, which acts as a preservative by coagulating the principle that begins the putrefaction. This compound, therefore, is proper when it is desirable to disinfect a body and prevent the infection from being reproduced; it is also most proper as an application to ill-conditioned sores, on account of the property it possesses of detaching the mortified from the healthy substance; while the Chloride of Lime serves only for a simple disinfection, that is to say, for the purification of a body which is immediately examined.

The mode of preparing the Chlorides is not mentioned, but we see that the articles are advertised at Philadelphia, and we believe they are also prepared by Mr. Lauriat, an excellent practical chemist at Roxbury, and kept for sale by the druggists in this city.

MEMORIA MEDICA.

THE amount of practical knowledge which dies with a wise and experienced physician, is altogether incalculable. The amount which dies in the memory of the living is scarcely less. Diseases are assuming forms of uncommon character,—remedies are exerting great and unexpected power over diseases, in every city and every village where a doctor and a patient are to be found. In the future practice of the Physician to whom such event may occur, it is perhaps improved for his own reputation and the good of the families he attends; or more probably, if the

case do not recur to his observation soon, it is forgotten, and the world is no better for what ought to have done it an essential service.

In a liberal profession it is a duty not only to acquire useful knowledge, but to put it in such form as to preserve and diffuse it; and when we are told that the events of practical value occurring in the private practice of the most obscure physicians,—nay more, that the knowledge amassed by the judicious and experienced practitioner of three score years, and even his own reflections, may be easily saved from dying with him, may be easily imparted to those who come after,—a degree of curiosity is felt to know how this may be effected,—a desire will be felt, by every good man in the profession, to be active in thus advancing the cause of medical science and general benevolence.

The means of doing this are now offered the profession, in the form of a "*Medical Common-place Book*," recently published by Carter & Hendee. It is arranged by a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and published in a form well adapted for the purposes it is designed to accomplish. We give below the *Preface* to this work, in order to explain more fully its plan and object.

"Medical knowledge is of all kinds the most fugacious and difficult to be fixed. The immense multiplicity of facts which crowd the memory of the experienced practitioner, defies the most retentive powers. It has been correctly observed, that a Physician never makes use of more than ten years' experience, and beyond that, *forgets* as much as he *learns*. A common-place book supplies, in a

considerable degree, this defect so universally felt and complained of. Every medical man, whether pupil or practitioner, is constantly meeting with some fact or observation which it would be of use to him hereafter to recur to, and yet it would be in vain to trust the recollection of it to his memory alone. This is peculiarly true of successful extemporaneous prescriptions, and of curious cases and unexpected recoveries, and facts disclosed by the examination of morbid parts after death.

"The following work is intended to furnish a convenient depository of this fleeting and ephemeral knowledge; and it is hoped that it will be made useful, not only to practitioners themselves, but likewise to the public, by enabling any one to communicate the results of his experience with comparatively little trouble. A large list of the most important terms occurring in general practice, is alphabetically arranged, and a convenient space is left for the addition of new terms. In order not to swell this list, the terms used in Chemistry have been left out, as their number would require a common-place book by itself.

"The mode of using a common-place book upon this plan is commonly known. Suppose a case of cutaneous disease, which has long baffled the attempts to cure it, suddenly yields to a new and fortunate prescription. These facts are recorded, and the number of the page in which the record is placed, is put against the words 'cutaneous diseases.' The same number may likewise, without the least confusion, be placed against several other words, as 'skin,' 'prescription,' 'cure.' In this way, everything which is recorded may be found without trouble."

Students attending Medical Lectures will find the above-mentioned work a very convenient depository for such facts and observations as

they may wish to preserve for future use.

MEDICINE NO MYSTERY.

A POPULAR work on medicine, bearing this title, has just been published in Dublin by John Morrison, M.D. If there is any fact perfectly undeniable, we believe it to be, that works of this description do more harm than good to the people, and more good than harm to the faculty. Dr. Morrison has, on the whole, treated the subject in as interesting a manner as could be expected, although he evinces more policy than philosophy;—his views are calculated to take with the general reader, though, in the main, erroneous and superficial. His remarks on *venereal diseases* are very correct.

"These are the diseases," says he, "that have afforded such an ample field to the swindling empiric and unprincipled charlatan, in conjunction with the maladies more peculiarly called venereal ones, in his designs on the purses of his victims. The credulity of mankind,—the pride of our nature, which teaches us to brave death itself rather than risk the scorn of mankind,—and, above all, the ignorance of the principles of life, and of the science of medicine, which I have dwelt upon in the introduction to this treatise,—have all aided those adventurers in their projects, and have enabled them to possess palaces, bought and constructed with the treasures and blood of their victims. Witness the enormous fortunes of the S——s, the L——s, &c., of to-day, and of all the secret doctors of days gone by, by whose means the blood of so many families has been tainted in its source. Look at G—— House, that structure raised from the balsam so appropriately called *golden*!"

MODE OF ARRESTING HEMORRHAGE BY TWISTING THE BLEEDING VESSEL.

M. AMUSSAT lately communicated to the Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris, an account of experiments made by him to prevent and arrest hemorrhage without the means usually employed. Observing that lacerated wounds are not accompanied by loss of blood, which may be attributed to the mode in which the arteries are torn, M. Amussat endeavored to ascertain whether he could prevent hemorrhage by treating the arteries in a similar manner. His attempts, however, were not successful till he thought of *twisting* the bleeding vessels. The first trial having been successful, he made many others on different animals, as dogs, rabbits, horses, &c., and with the same results. His method is as follows:—An artery being cut, its extremity is seized with a pincers, the branches of which are kept closed by means of a spring; a sufficient force is used to draw out the vessel five or six lines; it is separated from the surrounding parts; then laying hold of it with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, the pincers is turned five or six times on its axis. The twisting ought to be continued until the portion of the vessel held in the gripe of the instrument is torn. From this portion there results a *cul de sac*, which prevents the flow of blood. If the operation be performed without first fixing the artery with the fingers applied beyond the point of the instrument, the vessel is twisted up as high as the next collateral branch.

M. Amussat has practised this method in amputation of the thigh and in extirpation of the testicle, with success. The advantages which he attributes to it are, producing more speedy union, and being able to arrest bleeding without depending upon assistants, which in the army especially would render it of great importance.

In a case of extirpation of the

mamma, M. Roux, who performed the operation (August 11th), tried the plan of twisting the arteries to stop the bleeding. With two or three vessels it answered, but in as many others it failed, perhaps owing to their being deep-seated. Ligatures were then applied in the usual way.

In a case at the Hôpital Beaujon, when M. Blandin amputated the female breast for scirrhus (July 28th), after the removal of the diseased part, blood flowed very freely from an artery at the upper angle of the wound: the vessel was seized with a pincers, and twisted upon itself *four times*: the bleeding stopped, so that the wound admitted of being immediately united in the most perfect manner by adhesive straps. The artery was about the size of a crow-quill, and the pincers with which it was seized was one of those employed by watchmakers, the bits of which are square-pointed, and correspond to each other for a considerable extent by a plane surface, marked with transverse striæ, which renders them more tenacious.—*Journ. Hebdom.*

Iodine at the Hospital of St. Louis.—Dr. Lugol, Physician to the Hospital of St. Louis, in Paris, the only establishment in which patients declared scrofulous are admitted, has adopted iodine in the cure of scrofula with great success. His mode of administering it is two-fold:

—internally, as a solution of iodine, from half a grain to a grain, in a pint or half a pint of distilled water, in which he also dissolved a certain quantity of common salt. In external applications, he used salves composed of the usual sorts of grease with certain proportions of iodine and iodate of potassium, or the simple prot-iodate of mercury. In the space of seventeen months, M. Lugol had the opportunity of treating with this remedy 109 scrofulous patients. Of these, thirty-nine remained in the hospital at the end of the year: thirty had quitted the establishment much benefited: thirty-six had left it perfectly cured; and there had been four on whom the treatment had proved inefficacious. M. Lugol communicated the details of his remedy, and the cures he had performed, in a memoir to the Royal Academy; and the committee to whom it was referred to inquire into the subject, reported that all the assertions of the Doctor had proved exact; that the evident effect of the remedy had been established, and that M. Lugol deserved the encouragement of the Academy.—*London Athenæum.*

Massachusetts General Hospital.—The Managers of this Hospital, having found it expedient to increase the number of medical officers, have appointed JOHN WARE, M.D., an Assistant Physician to the Institution.

WEEKLY REPORT OF DEATHS IN BOSTON, ENDING OCTOBER 24.

Date.	Sex.	Age.	Disease.	Date.	Sex.	Age.	Disease.
Oct. 16.	M.	21 mo	infantile		F.	36 yrs	mortification
17.	F.	6	unknown		F.	71	lung fever
	F.	41-3 y	lung fever	21.	M.	3	croup
18.	F.	28	unknown		F.	19	intemperance
	F.	49	consumption	22.	M.	21	brain fever
	F.	31	do.	23.	F.	2 1-3	lung fever
	F.	10 w	lung fever		F.	22 mo	measles
19.	M.	4 yrs	croup		F.	24 yrs	convulsions
	M.	3 mo	quinsy		M.	14 mo	measles
20.	F.	4 1/2 yrs	childbed	24.	F.	19 yrs	unknown

Males, 6—Females, 14. Total, 20.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

ANATOMICO-SURGICAL DRAWINGS, and Descriptions of all the Surgical Operations, according to the most approved methods. By L. J. VON BIERKOWSKY. Translated from the German. In two volumes, and 570 drawings on 58 folio plates.

EXTRACTS FROM THE PROSPECTUS.

"Encouraged by the approbation of the Medical Profession, it is proposed to publish a work under the present title."

"This work contains 570 drawings, on 58 plates folio; to which is annexed, in two volumes 8vo. a concise explanation of each surgical operation. The plates exhibit not only the parts interested in operations, in their natural position and size, but, what is much more important, represent the different acts or stages of the whole operation, while others exhibit delineations of such morbid affections as consist in the change of the natural position, structure, color, &c. In order to afford the work at a moderate price, the plates will be Lithographic; and for the purpose of securing perfect accuracy, engagements have been entered into for their preparation in Berlin, under the especial direction of two of the most distinguished Professors of the University of that city."

A specimen of the translation, and the plates, is deposited for inspection at the Bookstore of CARTER & HENDEE, who receive subscriptions for the work.

Subscribers will be furnished with the work, and the first impressions of the plates, at the price of \$30.

The subscription list will be open until the 1st of November, 1829, after which period the price of the work will be raised to \$40.

P. S. For the accommodation of subscribers the work will be issued in five Numbers, at \$6 each, payable on delivery. Sept. 29. 18202N1D.

CONSOLIDATED COPAIVA.

"COPAIVA may be given in this form without the least inconvenience. Neither communicating taste, nor imparting odor to the breath, it is also retained without the least disquietude or uneasiness to the stomach; and I am informed by Dr. Rosseau, that in large doses it does not purge."—*Phil. Journal of Med. Sciences.*

See an article in this Journal, Aug. 18th.

EUROPEAN LEECHES.

An excellent lot of European Leeches, which will be sold at a reasonable price, or applied, in any part of Boston or in the vicinity.

For sale by NATHAN JARVIS, 188 Washington Street, where Physicians will find medicines at as reasonable terms as at any place in Boston.

Aug. 25.

coopt.

CARTER & HENDEE have just published,—The Constitution of Man, considered in Relation to External Objects. By GEORGE COMBE.

From the Preface to the American edition.

"Mr. Combe's work should be placed with those, of which so many within a few years have appeared, which are devoted to the all-absorbing topic of Education. It treats of moral, intellectual, and physical education. This is not formally done under so many distinct heads. But the whole course of reasoning of the author, and the whole array of all his illustrations, have it always obviously in view to show how the highest cultivation of each of these may be most surely brought about.

"The publishers have printed this edition from a belief that there is much in the work to interest the community.

"It has a novelty to reward the general inquirer, and it presents the well known under novel aspects. There is one class amongst us who may study it with much advantage. Scholars are referred to, a class here too small to form a distinct order with habits of their own, and who insensibly fall into those which, although not mischievous, to the multitude on the score of health, too often make ill health the portion of the sedentary student, and bring upon him premature decay.—To all classes it is recommended, and the various learning and acuteness of the author well fit him to write a book which addresses its instructions to the whole community." Sept. 8.

ATREATISE on the Scrofulous Disease, by C. G. HUFELAND, Physician to the King of Prussia, &c., translated from the French of M. Bousquet, by Charles D. Meigs, M.D., is just received and for sale by CARTER & HENDEE.

Sept. 8.

Published weekly, by JOHN COTTON, at 184, Washington St. corner of Franklin St., to whom all communications must be addressed, *postpaid*.—Price three dollars per annum, if paid in advance, three dollars and a half if not paid within three months, and four dollars if not paid within the year. The postage for this is the same as for other newspapers.